

REMARKS

Claims 3-4, 6-9, 12-14, 16-20, 24-28, 30-35, and 38-45 are now pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Jones (U.S. Pat. No. 6,212,710). Claims 12-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Condell (U.S. Pat. No. 379,449). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

By way of the present Response, Claims 12 and 20 have been amended, thereby rendering these rejections moot. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration and withdrawal of the present rejections are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2, 5-9, 14, 16-17, 22-23, 26-28, 30-36, and 39-43 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sherman ('276) in view of Merrill (U.S. Pat. No. 403,851) or Merrill (U.S. Pat. No. 403,850) and George (U.S. Pat. No. 4,283,811) or Berry et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 3,591,247) or Japanese document (53-32258). Claims 18-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sherman ('276) in view of either Merrill '851 or '850 and George or Berry et al. or Japanese document (53-32258), as applied to Claim 5 above, and further in view of Jones (U.S. Pat. No.

6,212,710). Claims 35, 44, and 45 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sherman ('276) in view of Condell (U.S. Pat. No. 379,449) and George (U.S. Pat. No. 4,283,811) or Berry et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 3,591,247) or Japanese document (53-32258). These rejections are respectfully traversed. Applicants have elected to amend the claims as indicated by the Examiner. Additionally, Applicants have amended the remaining claims and/or the dependability thereof. Accordingly, all of the currently pending claims are in condition for allowance.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner states that Claim 4 is allowed. The Examiner further states that Claims 3, 24, 25, 37, and 38 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants have amended Claims 3, 24, 35, and 38 to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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